



Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office

Operations Directorate — Fact Sheet

ISSUE: HUMINT Collection Support of Personnel Recovery

BACKGROUND: Successful military operations depend on timely reliable intelligence and good planning. The Intelligence Community (IC) is currently reviewing and updating the primary human resources intelligence (HUMINT) tasking mechanism addressing Support for Military Operational Planning to ensure appropriate intelligence collection assets are adequately postured to respond as necessary.

DISCUSSION: A dedicated interagency element, comprised of staff from throughout the intelligence community, defines and prioritizes—in consultation with principal intelligence users and policy makers—broad based, long-range, national-level needs appropriate for HUMINT collection. These priorities, organized by transnational issue, specific country, or geographic region, are incorporated into comprehensive tasking directives to serve as the foundation for all facets of tasking, planning, and developing responsive HUMINT collection capabilities. Just as every national intelligence need is translated into specific directives, collection capabilities of every component of the national HUMINT community are considered for tasking as appropriate. Using these directives as the basis for driving collection, intelligence users further define specialized and specific requirements. For example, within the framework of the directive related to Vietnam exist broad requirements dictating collection of information related to those unaccounted for from the conflict in Southeast Asia. DPMO further defines that problem-set with comprehensive requirements representing specific intelligence gaps and needs to direct collection on specific losses, locations, or to new sources.

The interagency element is responsible for consulting all relevant policy elements throughout the government to ensure the entire spectrum of national foreign intelligence needs are addressed and specifically tasked. Continuous review of tasked directives is effected as warranted by changing intelligence needs, and directives are scheduled for periodic review or revision. As the process has been institutionalized over the past several years and issue-driven directives have been considered and addressed, major revisions to existing directives has been delayed in some cases.

The interagency coordinated directive on Support to Military Operational Planning is currently under review pending significant revision in the near future; incorporation of support to Personnel Recovery will be included as a specific priority. Lessons learned show that the longer an individual is isolated, the less likely recovery operations will be successful. Consequently, intelligence assets must be correctly postured to respond to and resolve personnel recovery incidents. The update of the directive will validate personnel recovery as a consumer need of theater and national level policy makers, and will drive the collection of information from human sources for information relative to a specific situation involving isolated personnel through final resolution. DPMO has formulated many of the implementing issue-specific and specialized collection requirements relating to recovery and forwarded them to the HUMINT community for collection in response to the tasking forthcoming in the new directive.